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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/63/L.24/Rev.1 and Add.1)*]

63/22. Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,

Recalling its resolutions 56/6 of 9 November 2001, on the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations, 57/6 of 4 November 2002, concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, 57/337 of 3 July 2003, on the prevention of armed conflict, 58/128 of 19 December 2003, on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation, 59/23 of 11 November 2004, on the promotion of interreligious dialogue, 59/143 of 15 December 2004, on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001–2010, 60/167 of 16 December 2005, on human rights and cultural diversity, and 62/157 of 18 December 2007, on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief,

Recalling also its resolution 62/90 of 17 December 2007 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, and the declaration of 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures,

Recognizing that cultural diversity and the pursuit of cultural development by all peoples and nations are a source of mutual enrichment for the cultural life of humankind,

Taking note of the various initiatives at the national, regional and international levels to enhancing dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations, which are mutually reinforcing and interrelated, inter alia, the fourth Asia-Pacific Dialogue on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace and Harmony, held in Phnom Penh from 3 to 6 April 2008,[2] the Third Global Inter-Media Dialogue, held in Bali, Indonesia, on 7 and 8 May 2008, the Fourth Asia-Europe

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See A/62/949.

Meeting Interfaith Dialogue, held in Amsterdam from 3 to 5 June 2008,[3] the World Conference on Dialogue, held in Madrid from 16 to 18 July 2008,[4] the Sixth General Meeting of the World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations", held in Rhodes, Greece, from 9 to 13 October 2008, the Second Alliance of Civilizations Forum, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 2 and 3 April 2009, the Special Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development, to be held in Manila from 26 to 28 May 2009, the fifth Asia-Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue, to be held in Australia in 2009, the Parliament of the World's Religions, to be held in Melbourne, Australia, from 3 to 9 December 2009, and the Third Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, to be held in Astana on 1 and 2 July 2009, with the participation and technical assistance of the United Nations system,

Affirming the importance of sustaining the process of engaging all stakeholders in the interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue within the appropriate initiatives at the various levels,

Recognizing the commitment of all religions to peace,

1. *Affirms* that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of the dialogue among civilizations and of the culture of peace;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace;[5]

3. *Also takes note* of the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on interreligious dialogue in the context of its efforts to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, as well as activities related to a culture of peace, and welcomes its focus on concrete action at the global, regional and subregional levels and its flagship project on the promotion of interfaith dialogue;

4. *Reaffirms* the solemn commitment of all States to fulfil their obligations to promote universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and other instruments relating to human rights and international law, the universal nature of these rights and freedoms being beyond question;

5. *Encourages* the promotion of dialogue among the media from all cultures and civilizations, emphasizes that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, and reaffirms that the exercise of this right carries with it special duties and responsibilities and may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall be only such as are provided by law and necessary for respect of the rights or reputations of others, protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals;

6. *Encourages* Member States to consider, as and where appropriate, initiatives that identify areas for practical action in all sectors and levels of society for the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance,

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[3] See A/63/510.

[4] See A/63/499.

[5] A/63/262.

understanding and cooperation, inter alia, the ideas suggested during the High-level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace, held on 4 and 5 October 2007, including the idea of an enhanced process of dialogue among world religions;

7. *Takes note* of the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the culture of peace, held on 12 and 13 November 2008, during the sixty-third session of the Assembly, in which the President of the Assembly had invited participation at the highest possible level;

8. *Requests* the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, as the focal point for interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational matters, to coordinate with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in facilitating consideration of the possibility of proclaiming a United Nations decade for interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace;

9. *Takes note* of the Third Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace, held on 25 September 2008 in New York;

10. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in consultation with Member States, and through extrabudgetary resources, to play a leading role in the preparations for the celebration of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, in 2010, taking into account General Assembly resolution 61/185 of 20 December 2006 and the relevant provisions of Assembly resolution 62/90;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

50th plenary meeting
13 November 2008